NO. 82-1909

In The

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1983

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD,

Petitioner,

vs.

SCOOBA MANUFACTURING COMPANY,

Respondent.

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

MEMORANDUM OF RESPONDENT SUGGESTING THAT THE CAUSE IS MOOT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
The Section 7 Issue	2
The Section 8(a)(3) Issue	4
Conclusion	5

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Cases:	Pages
City Disposal Systems, Inc. v. NLRB, 683 F.2d 1005 (6th Cir. 1982), *cert. granted*, No. 82-960 (March 28, 1983)	3
Environmental Protection Agency v. Brown, 431 U.S. 99, 103-04 (1977)	4
Meyers Industries, Inc., 268 N.L.R.B. No. 73, 115 LRRM 1025 (1984)	3, 4
NLRB v. Associated Milk Producers, Inc., 711 F.2d 627 (5th Cir. 1983)	4
NLRB v. Charles H. McCauley Associates, Inc., 657 F.2d 685 (5th Cir. 1981)	5
NLRB v. Transportation Management Corp., — U.S. —, 103 S.Ct. 2469, 76 L.Ed.2d 667 (1983)	4
United States v. Johnston, 268 U.S. 220 (1925)	5
Washington v. Washington State Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel Association, 443 U.S. 658 (1979)	4
Wright Line, a Division of Wright Line, Inc., 251 N.L.R.B. 1083 (1980)	4

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES—Continued

STATUTES:	Pages
National Labor Relations Act, 29 U.S.C. §151 *et seq.*:	
Section 7, 29 U.S.C. §157	2
Section 8(a)(1), 29 U.S.C. §158(a)(1)	2
Section 8(a)(3), 29 U.S.C. §158(a)(3)	2, 4, 5

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A. INTRODUCTION

The respondent[1] in the above entitled case files this memorandum to advise the Court of certain facts which,

[1]Respondent Scooba Manufacturing Company, Inc., a Mississippi corporation, has no parent corporation, non-wholly owned subsidiaries, or affiliates.

in respondent's view, render a major portion of this cause moot.

The questions the petitioner seeks to raise on this appeal are twofold:

(1) Whether Sections 7 and 8(a)(1) of the National Labor Relations Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 158(a)(1), protect individual employee conduct in the absence of an extant collective bargaining agreement merely because the individual employee's conduct is deemed to affect other employees (Petition, pp. 6-7); and

(2) Whether the Fifth Circuit's determination that the facts of the instant case did not warrant a violation of Section 8(a)(3) of the National Labor Relations Act, 29 U.S.C. § 158(a)(3), was erroneous (Petition, pp. 7-8).

B. THE SECTION 7 ISSUE

With regard to the Section 7 issue, the Petitioner states its position as follows:

> What [the Fifth Circuit's decision] ignore[s] is that the Board, relying on its expertise in these matters, has concluded that certain conduct undertaken by a single individual inherently affects all other employees and thus is within the coverage of Section 7. Accordingly, the Board argued, *inter alia*, in its petition in *City Disposal Systems, Inc.* (82-960 Pet. 11), that an employee who successfully asserts a right in a collective bargaining agreement necessarily benefits all members of the unit subject to that agreement. Hence, regardless of the specific employee's motive or personal interest in the outcome, the action is still concerted activity . . . . Similarly, any prounion statement made in the course of an employee-management discussion of alleged arbitrary employment practices sufficiently anticipates possible future union activity

> to be protected by Section 7. If the Board's position in *City Disposal Systems, Inc.* is sustained by this Court, the Fifth Circuit's requirement of specific evidence of "concertedness" in the present case would necessarily be undermined. . . .

Petition, pp. 6-7 (footnotes and citations omitted).

On January 6, 1984, the National Labor Relations Board rendered a decision in *Meyer Industries, Inc.*, 268 N.L.R.B. No. 73, 115 LRRM 1025 (1984), which overrules a long line of Board cases and completely reverses its position in the instant case. In *Meyers* the Board specifically rejected the "*per se* standard of concerted activity, by which the Board determines what *ought to be* of group concern and then artificially presumes that it *is* of group concern. . . ." 268 N.L.R.B. No. 73, Slip Op. at 10, 115 LRRM at 1028 (emphasis in original). Accordingly, the Board now takes the position that, absent an existing collective bargaining agreement, the General Counsel must prove an individual employee acted "with or on the authority of other employees" in order to be engaged in protected activity. 262 N.L.R.B. No. 73, Slip Op. at 12, 115 LRRM at 1029.

The Board, in its *Meyers* decision, specifically distinguished Section 7's application in cases where no collective bargaining agreement existed and those cases involving an extant collective bargaining agreement. 262 N.L.R.B. No. 73, Slip Op. at 11, 115 LRRM at 1028. Consequently, the Board embraced the respondent's position in the instant case and recognized that the so-called "*Interboro* doctrine," currently under consideration by this Court in *City Disposal Systems, Inc. v. NLRB*, 683 F.2d 1005 (6th Cir. 1982), *cert. granted*, No. 82-960 (March 28,

1983), is fundamentally and conceptually distinguishable from the issue present here.

The *Meyers* decision completely reverses the petitioner's position on the Section 7 issue. As a result, the requisite adversity required to invoke the Court's jurisdiction is lacking thus rendering the issue non-justiciable. *See Washington v. Washington State Comm'l Passenger Fishing Vessel Ass'n*, 443 U.S. 658, 691 (1979); *Environmental Protection Agency v. Brown*, 431 U.S. 99, 103-04 (1977). Since the intervening *Meyers* decision renders the Section 7 issue moot, and, concomitantly, makes any decision regarding this issue purely advisory in nature, the respondent respectfully submits that the Court should not pass upon this issue.

C. THE SECTION 8(a)(3) ISSUE

The Section 8(a)(3) issue presented in the instant case is totally unworthy of this Court's review. Far from presenting a significant legal controversy warranting this Court's attention, the instant case presents only a disputed factual setting over which the parties are at issue (Brief of Respondent, pp. 9-10). Indeed, the Fifth Circuit has consistently applied the legal principles espoused in *Wright Line, a Division of Wright Line, Inc.*, 251 N.L.R.B. 1083 (1980),[2] and, despite petitioner's assertions to the contrary, did not purport to alter those legal concepts in the instant case. *Compare NLRB v. Associated Milk Prod.*,

[2]This Court recently approved the Board's *Wright Line* analysis in *NLRB v. Transportation Management Corp.*, — U.S. —, 103 S.Ct. 2469, 76 L.Ed.2d 667 (1983).

Inc., 711 F.2d 627 (5th Cir. 1983) *with NLRB v. Charles H. McCauley Assoc., Inc.*, 657 F.2d 685 (5th Cir. 1981).

Accordingly, the instant case does not merit the Court's review pursuant to its long standing refusal to embroil itself in factual disputes where no significant legal issue is involved. *United States v. Johnston*, 268 U.S. 220, 227 (1925).

D. CONCLUSION

For these reasons, respondent suggests that the Section 7 issue sought to be raised is moot and should be remanded with a direction to dismiss. Furthermore, the Section 8(a)(3) issue does not warrant this Court's review and the Petition, insofar as it relates to that issue, should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

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